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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. STEVENS].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.
Eternal Lord God, who illuminates our paths with love and laughter, hallowed be Your Name. Lord, thank You for life's clouds and storms that position us to receive Your deliverance. Thank You also for refusing to move our mountains but instead giving us strength to climb them. Give us the wisdom to see spiritual things in life's commonplace happenings. May a baby's cry or a falling leaf or the gentle dew or a golden sunset whisper to us about the sacred.

Today, bless our dedicated lawmakers and each member of their staffs who routinely deliver excellence in the midst of the frenetic. May they never forget Your promise to always be with them. Guide them today with fresh insights on living abundantly. Supply all their needs, for the kingdom, the power, and the glory belong to You. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Good morning, Mr. President.

The Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m. The

first half of the time will be under the control of the majority leader or his designee, and the remaining time will be under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

Following morning business at 11, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1637, the JOBS bill, also known as the FSC/ETI bill. The bill managers were able to make some progress during yesterday's session by working through several amendments. As a reminder, a cloture motion was filed with respect to the FSC bill. That vote will occur tomorrow. We hope, if cloture is invoked, we can finish the bill this week. It is still possible we could consider related amendments during today's session. Therefore, rollcall votes are possible throughout the day, although we do not anticipate any vote prior to our respective policy luncheons. If there are votes, obviously Senators will be notified.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority whip.

VOTE ON OVERTIME

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last night there was an exchange between the distinguished Senator from Kentucky and myself, pleasant as it always is between the two of us, regarding the overtime vote that we believe is essential to moving forward on this legislation that will be before the Senate at 11 o'clock today. My friend, the senior Senator from Kentucky, said we had voted on this once before.

I wanted to make sure what the facts were. There is no question that I was right. We did vote on it once before. We voted on it in the Senate and it passed by a nice margin. It was voted on in the House and passed by a nice margin. It was on the Omnibus appropriations bill.

Magically, when it came back after the conference, it was stricken, even though it had passed both Houses of the legislature by a large margin.

The point is, having had a vote on the overtime bill should not take away the fact that it was stripped in conference with Democrats not participating in the conference. We believe that overtime is important.

On my trip home last week, I visited fire stations and police stations. The first thing they talk about is: What is happening to our overtime? People in America are concerned by the hundreds of thousands, if not millions. That is why we demand a vote on overtime.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, very briefly, my good friend from Nevada and I discussed this last night and I listened carefully to what he just said. I want to make one adjustment as we get the facts before our colleagues.

On the amendment to prohibit the Labor Department from going forward with the 541 regulations, that was approved in the Senate. We voted on it earlier. It was not approved in the House. That is why it was a matter in conference.

As my good friend from Nevada pointed out, it was subsequently not agreed to in the conference. There was an additional vote in the House on a motion to instruct conferees, which came out the way my friend from Nevada suggests; but on the vote that counted, the House of Representatives did not approve the effort to block the Department of Labor from going forward with the overtime regulation.

As my friend from Nevada conceded, we have voted on this once and I am rather confident, given the persistence of Members on that side of the aisle, at some point we will probably vote on it again. But this underlying bill is a bill that is widely supported on both sides of the aisle. Sanctions have already been imposed on March 1 on American

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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